

PEOPLE & THINGS

THE path of Anglo-American relations is thorny enough in all conscience and it would be a pity if the minuscule rift between the "All-America Rose Selections" and the British National Rose Society were not immediately closed.

The facts are that last year a rose christened "Lilibet" was accorded the highest honour of American horticulture—the All-America Rose Award for 1954, and Mr. Sidney B. Hutton, President of the A.A.R.S., says that official clearance for the name was obtained from "British agencies" in America. But when a British rose-grower wished to distribute "Lilibet" in this country, permission to do so was not granted by the British National Rose Society.

By Any Other Name

THE reason for their action was proper and would have the approval of rose-growers throughout the world, for it is a strict rule that no rose may be named after a living person without that person's express consent.

This formally had not been observed in the case of this otherwise exemplary American rose, and I believe a belated approach to Buckingham Palace was met with polite resistance, probably on the grounds (with which I sympathise) that pet names are best discarded with the rest of childhood's bric-a-brac.

But this little contretemps is no reflection on the distinguished growers of America, and I hope the wound will heal as quickly as do all those normally associated with roses.

A Favourite Ambassador

IN my life-time there has been no more popular Ambassador of France to the Court of St. James than the present foyen of the corps, Monsieur Massigli. In all the many worlds that are contained in Britain he is welcomed with a warmth of affection we rarely accord to a foreigner.

Last week one such world—the nobility and elders of Scotland—demonstrated our regard for him in a moving fashion. As guest of honour at a dinner at the Palace of Holyroodhouse on the eve of the General Assembly of the Scottish Church, the Duke of Hamilton gave the company the following toasts: "The Queen," "The Church of Scotland" and then, to the accompaniment of the Marseillaise, "The Auld Alliance."

Though moved, Monsieur Massigli was, as usual, not at a loss. Referring in a later conversation to the Entente Cordiale he said: "It is, of course, only a baby, but since it was a Scotsman who invented it—Lord Aberdeen, when Queen Victoria visited Napoleon III in Paris—it is in fact a Scottish baby."

American Thunderer

MR. ARTHUR HAYS SULZBERGER, publisher of the "New York Times," has just completed his annual visit to England and will be back at his desk in New York tomorrow. He first visited London at the age of 44, fifty-nine years ago. On that occasion he asked his father to take him to Trafalgar Square and lift him up to one of the lions so that he could shake its paw good-bye. Since those days he has never wavered in his

By ATTICUS

friendship for England, and it would be difficult to estimate the value of the generous and massive support his great newspaper gave to our cause during the last war.

Two Cables

WE were talking about famous American art collectors and my host told the story of Mrs. Hearst's visit to Wales to inspect St. Donat's Castle which the late Mr. Randolph Hearst had just purchased and on which he wanted her opinion. She cabled him: "Nice but small," to which her husband brusquely replied: "Then add to it."

Mr. Sulzberger capped this story. It seems that Mrs. Samuel Untermyer, on a visit to Europe, was asked by her late husband, the famous American lawyer, to ascertain the price of a particular Renol he coveted. Mrs. Untermyer cabled home the astronomical figure and Mr. Untermyer hurriedly despatched the reply: "No. Price too high."

Unfortunately the French Post Office omitted that first vital full stop.

"Wick Burns True"

WE have not, I hope, heard the last of the tug-of-war between Lyon King of Arms and the Royal Burgh of Wick over the crippling motto which Lyon wishes to hang upon this unoffending little harbour town. But it will surprise the more fortunate Sassenach to learn that the otherwise genial Sir Thomas Innes of Learney can force "Wick Works Weel" down the Burghers' throats whether they like it or not.

Conceivably he might accept the more dialectically correct, but even less euphonious, "wuks" instead of "works," but beyond that Wick has no redress. The Court of Lord Lyon is an integral part of the Scottish legal system, and its decisions are backed by legal sanctions.

This Happy Land

IN Scotland the motto is part of the coat, but in England a man may adopt what motto he likes and change it when he likes. The College of Arms can issue grants of arms under the Earl Marshal's authority, but it cannot control their misuse.

To take an example from the most famous dispute in English heraldic history, if today a Grosvenor were to purloin *azure a bend or* from a Scrope, and adopt it as his own, the ugly deed would go unpunished, for our own Court of Chivalry, the Earl Marshal's Court, has not operated. I am told, for 200 years.

There are those who hold that there is no bar to its being resurrected, so it only requires some enthusiast with a love of ceremony and a heraldic grievance to get us all back in the same boat as the luckless Burghers of Wick.

Ulanova—Diaghileff

THE Soviet Ballet Company were bitterly disappointed at the cancellation of their Paris Season, whose opening, if one can judge from the clamour for seats, promised to be as sensational as the first performance of the Diaghileff Company. And they could not understand all this worry about "riots." The word was

unknown to them. Such things simply do not happen in Russia.

The company consisted of forty-eight, led by their idol Galina Ulanova, and included Dudinskaya, Struchkova, Kondratov, Sergeyev (who also acted as *maitre de ballet*), Shelest, and Farmanyaniz (the last two already known to London) and their programme was to consist of *divertissements* selected from famous ballets. To have transported the whole company with costumes and scenery for, for instance, "Romeo and Juliet" would have involved more than two hundred dancers and this, apart from the cost, would have meant bringing the season at the Kirov or the Bolshoi to a stop.

Late Night Special

MY friend who tells me these things was as impressed by the simplicity and lack of affectation of the company as by their *joie de vivre* and physical fitness. During intervals between rehearsals with the Opéra Orchestra they made expeditions by motor-coach, and in the shops their main purchases consisted of French perfumes and photographic books on the ballet. They also went to see Markova dance and afterwards sang the praises of her artistry and of the beauty of her arms and hands.

One happy note relieved the dancers' disappointment at the failure to open. On May 9 a French Sunday newspaper published a full account of the company's first performance!

Two Cricket Heroes

TWO notable birthdays are celebrated in Kent during the present fortnight. Tich Freeman was sixty-five on May 17 and Frank Woolley will be sixty-seven on the 27th. For many years this illustrious pair, five foot two and six foot three respectively, were not only the long and short of Kent cricket but almost the be-all and end-all. For many years Freeman was easily the most consistent goolgy bowler in England and took 3,775 wickets before retiring to a house appropriately named "Dunbowlin." In 1928 he took over 300 wickets—a record in English cricket.

Woolley, with an equally remarkable catalogue of figures—59,000 runs and 2,068 wickets—will always be remembered as the most graceful player of his time and at sixty-seven he is a striking figure—silver haired and erect as a young Guardsman. I last met him at the reception given to the Pakistani cricket side by their High Commissioner, where his appearance was greeted with awe.

The Candle Trick

IF any one of my readers should have doubted the story I reported last week of a candle butt being shot through a mahogany door, may I remind them, as my learned friend John Hayward has reminded me, that Sir Thomas Browne pointed out some 300 years ago that it was a "vulgar error" to believe this to be impossible.

"Although," he wrote, "it be true that a candle out of a musket will pierce through an Inch Board or an Urinal force a nail through a plank, yet can few or none believe thus much without visible experiment. Which notwithstanding falls out more happily for knowledge; for these relations leaving unsatisfaction in the hearers, do stir up ingenious dubiosities unto experiment."